



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

It has become tradition that we hold our Christingle at the beautiful Hertford Baptist Church, we are incredibly lucky and thankful that we have this opportunity and would like to thank Helen and her team who always make us feel so welcome. We learnt all about Christingle and sang along to some Christmas classics. Some children had the honour of parading their own lit Christingles around the church which is always a beautiful moment. A huge thank you to everyone who came to the church to watch our Christingle, thank you to Helen for leading it and a huge thank you to Mr Chandler who organised it. We must also thank Dawn from the Baptist church who helped Helen demonstrate the meaning of the Christingle by once again dressing up as a giant orange, which always makes the children giggle. Photos from the Christingle are further down the newsletter.

'Oh no you didn't, oh yes we did!' The Pantomime at Beam Theatre was a brilliant way to spend our morning on Wednesday 4th December as the whole school walked down into Hertford to watch Cinderella. It was a surprise to find out we had the whole theatre to ourselves, our children (and staff) laughed and giggled along to some very funny moments. For some children this was their first opportunity to see live theatre and we would like to once again thank FOHS who contributed to the ticket costs so that every child could come. The ice cream was much appreciated too!

Over the last two weeks we have embraced our creative side at Hollybush with our annual Christmas performances which include the whole school. Years 1-3 performed Christmas around the World, where we were taken on a journey to visit countries including Australia and Poland to find out about their Christmas day traditions. I think you will agree there was an abundance of confidence and courage as our children performed their lines and sang the catchy songs. We learnt about other cultures throughout our curriculum and there was no better way to showcase our learning. Even our youngest children demonstrated their courage during our EYFS Sing and Sign concert, there wasn't a dry eye in the house as they sang their little hearts out. Our oldest children performed a carol concert, singing some traditional Christmas songs beautifully. Their last performance coincided with Christmas Jumper and Christmas dinner day. Sarah created a gingerbread man house on the wall of my office to serve the puddings out of and Julie, as always made a delicious Christmas dinner. A huge thank you to Julie and her team. What a very festive day! The carols didn't end at school for Year 5 who on Thursday last week spread more Christmas joy by singing at Carlton House, the children sang beautifully and it was very well received by the residents. This has been a Hollybush tradition for many years, it is a wonderful way to give back to our community. A huge thank you to Mr Gilkes and the Year 5 children for giving up their evening.

Sadly this term we say goodbye to a few staff members. Mrs Cuffaro has worked at Hollybush as a Nursery Nurse for many years and will be very missed by all of children and staff but we wish her a wonderful retirement and thank her for all her hard work. We also say goodbye to Mrs Parry, Ms Neville and Miss Johnstone. A huge thank you to all of you for all you have done for our Hollybush children. We welcome Mrs Sally Poole (Nursery) and Miss Samantha Taylor (Year 1) and look forward to them sharing their wealth of experience with Hollybush. Mrs Lawrance. will also be joining in Year 2 in the interim until Mrs Christman returns in February.

The end of this term means our Explore term is over, next term is our Discover term, where we will be focusing on History and Design and Technology. Please do look at your child's class page to look at the knowledge organisers which show you what your child will be learning.

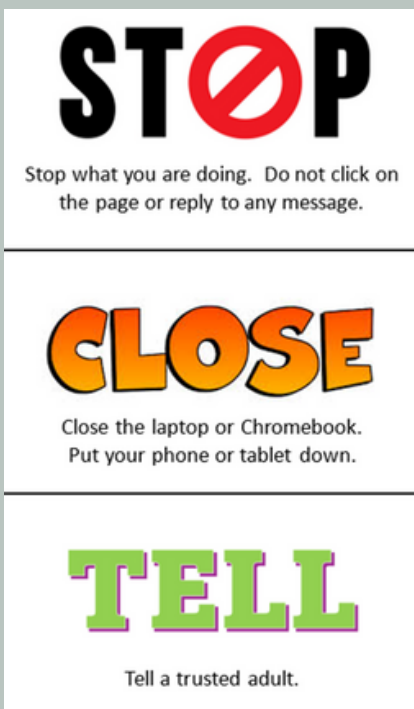
I hope you have a lovely break and enjoy the festivities. We look forward to seeing you on Monday 6th January 2025! A huge thank you for all your support this year and I wish you all a very happy and healthy new year.
Mrs. Cracknell



Online Safety

This half-term KS2 classes have been discussing what to do if they see something inappropriate on their screens at school. Whilst the school has robust filtering and monitoring systems, it is possible that unwanted content may get through. We have come up with three simple words to help children respond appropriately: **STOP, CLOSE, TELL**. Just like a construction worker wears a hard hat to protect themselves, the children know they have to 'put on' their e-safety helmets when online.

There's no reason why these three simple words – **STOP, CLOSE, TELL** – can be used at home, alongside other online safety measures you may have already put in place.



We are all excited about the fast approaching festive season. It's been great to have started this at school with this year's Christingle, a pantomime at BEAM, a wonderful Christmas concert by Years 4,5 & 6 not to mention incredible performances by EYFS and Years 1, 2 & 3. As we all look forward to enjoying some well-earned rest with friends and family, it's still vitally important that we do all we can to safeguard the children and young people in our care over the festive period.

However, it can be tricky to know what specific steps we can take to ensure our winter break is as calm and risk-free as possible. The National College has put together a great resource called 'Safety Over The Festive Season'. This includes a whole range of safeguarding tips. If you'd rather, you can listen to it as a podcast.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY



Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS



The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS



More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES



Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS



Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD



Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS



Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS



Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE



Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

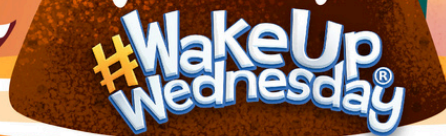
10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY



Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>

Christingle 2024



If you enjoyed our Christingle and would like to go along to the Christingle at Hertford Baptist Church on Sunday 22nd December, please find the details below. You are all very welcome.



Enjoy the wonder of Christmas and make your own Christingle at our interactive and fun-filled gathering celebrating Jesus, the Light of the World. There will be hundreds of dolly mixtures, a giant inflatable orange, and festive refreshments for everyone! Bring the whole family along!

Further Christmas events at the church can be found on their website [linked here](#).

Sports news

It has been another great half term of sport at Hollybush. Despite some inclement weather, the children have continued to embrace their active lifestyles through their daily mile, PE lessons and healthy lunchtimes led by our year 6 Play Rangers. The children have enjoyed a wide range of sports in their PE lessons from gymnastics to volleyball and all have worked hard to develop their skills.

Once again, Hollybush children have excelled in the HWSSP skipping challenge with many medal winners across KS2. The children had to see how many skips they could complete in one minute for KS2 and 30 seconds for KS1 and they performed brilliantly:

Boys:

Year 2: Gold - Alfie, Bronze - Ashley

Year 3: Bronze - Lewis

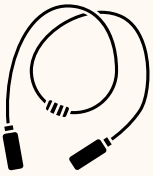
Year 4: Silver - Ruzhdi

Year 6: Gold - Harry H, Silver - Archie, Bronze - Frankie H

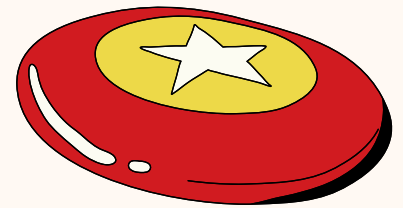
Girls

Year 4: Gold - Marni

Year 5: Silver - Cait.



On the 25th November, the whole school from EYFS to Year 6 took part in an Ultimate Frisbee Enrichment Day led by Colleen from HWSSP. The children learned a lot about a fun new sport which they are now able to play during their break and lunchtimes.



The football team continues to go from strength to strength under the tutelage of Paul Nash. Everyone who has turned up to training has now had a chance to play for the school team and have acquitted themselves admirably with their most recent result a convincing 3 - 1 win against Millmead who we will be playing in the Hope Cup on the 16th January.



HWSSP have also put on a number of sporting events that Hollybush have attended with the KS1 Every1In festival and the Badminton Roadshow being particular highlights. The Year 6 boys and girls also competed extremely well in a Basketball tournament at Presdales and were unfortunate not to make the top 3.

I have loved seeing the determination and courage that the children have displayed in learning new sports and competing with and against each other and look forward to many more sporting endeavours in the new year. Mr Mallick



Children of the World



Upcoming Events

2024
2025

December

Tuesday 3rd	Christingle PM 1:30pm
Wednesday 4th	Pantomime
Monday 9th	EYFS sing and sign - Nursery parents AM
Monday 9th	Years 4, 5 and 6 Carol concert PM
Tuesday 10th	EYFS sing and sign - Reception parents AM
Wednesday 11th	Years 1 -3 Christmas play PM
Thursday 12th	Year 1 - 3 Christmas play AM
Friday 13th	Year 4, 5 and 6 Carol concert AM
Friday 13th	Christmas dinner day
Monday 16th	Rock Steady Concert
Friday 20th	End of term 2pm finish

January

Monday 6th	Back to school
Thursday 9th	Martial arts day

February

Monday 17th - Friday 21st	Half term
Monday 24th	Inset day



Clubs

Click on the club name for link to book

Matt's clubs can be booked via the office or by emailing
mattogilviecoaching@aol.com

MONDAY

Rock Steady (during School day)

Reception - Story Club 12 - 12:30 pm - Sign up on Arbor

KS2 - Drama club 12:30 - 1 pm - Sign up on Arbor

Art club - <https://www.jam-arts.com/book-online>

TUESDAY

Year 1 - 6 Karate - 7:45 - 8:30 am

Year 1 - 3 Dodgeball with Matt Ogilvie Coaching 3.15pm - 4.15pm

THURSDAY

Musical theatre - 12:30 - 1 pm - sign up on Arbor - Year 2 - 6

Year 1 - 6 Dance Club 3.15pm - 4.15pm

FRIDAY

Ballet - 12:15 - 12:45 pm - sign up on Arbor - Reception and Year 1

Year 4 - 5 Football with Matt Ogilvie Coaching 3.15pm - 4.15pm

Year 1 - 6 East Herts Gymnastics 3.15pm - 4.15pm

Uniform

- All items should be unbranded and without any logo's other than the Hollybush logo.
- Children should bring a suitable coat and a water bottle every day, whatever the weather. We are outside in all weathers!
- Hair longer than shoulder length must be tied up in a hair band in school colours.

Formal uniform

White polo shirt

Grey Trousers
Grey skirt
Grey pinafore
Grey shorts

Bottle green round necked jumper
Bottle green cardigan

Black shoes

White / black or grey socks

Active uniform

Black plain Tshirt
Black logo Tshirt
White plain Tshirt

Tshirts should be round necked not polo shirts

Black jersey tracksuit bottoms
Black jersey shorts
Black cycle shorts
Black skort
Black leggings

Black zip through hoodie
Black hooded jumper

Black plain trainers

Swimming

Swimming hats MUST be worn for swimming lessons.

UNIFORMS MUST NOT BE MIXED AND MATCHED!!

IF YOUR CHILD IS WEARING ACTIVE WEAR IT MUST BE WITH A ROUND NECKED T-SHIRT AND A BLACK HOODIE / ZIP UP

IF YOUR CHILD IS WEARING FORMAL WEAR IT MUST BE WITH A POLO TOP OR SHIRT AND A GREEN JUMPER

Reminders

School starts at 8:45am

Fordwich Rise Gate entrance

The drive gate opens at 8:40 for Nursery, Reception and Year 1. Siblings of children in these year's may also enter through this gate.

Welwyn Road Gate entrance

Children in Year 2 and above

If your child arrives after 8:45am they will need to enter via the Office and will be marked as Late.

HOLIDAYS & MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

The School will not grant any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays will otherwise be classed as unauthorised absence from school.

Non urgent appointments such as dentist & doctors appointments MUST be made outside of school hours where possible.

Outstanding debts

Please can parents ensure owed balances on meals, wrap around care and nursery session are cleared promptly.

Lunches

Please ensure you select your child's lunch via the Arbor app prior to 8am.

Pre selecting lunches is now compulsory

[Link to lunch menu on website](#)

Please do not park across the driveways of the houses neighbouring the school.

	PE	Swimming	Forest School
MONDAY	YEAR 1 YEAR 5		YEAR 1
TUESDAY	YEAR 1 YEAR 2 YEAR 3 YEAR 5 YEAR 6		
WEDNESDAY			YEAR 2
THURSDAY	YEAR 2 YEAR 4		NURSERY RECEPTION
FRIDAY	NURSERY RECEPTION YEAR 3 YEAR 4 YEAR 6		YEAR 3 YEAR 4

Check out our class pages for information on what your child is learning this Term!
[Link to Class Pages](#)

Type of query	Member of staff to contact
Safeguarding/child protection	Mrs Noon, Mrs Cracknell and Mrs Richardson
Any issues relating to your child or another child in the class	Email class teacher to arrange a meeting, sometimes a phase leader may join this meeting
If you do not feel the issue has been resolved or you may need more advice.	<p>Step 1 Phase Leader EYFS-Miss White KS1- Mrs Cracknell (until Feb 25) KS2-Mr Chandler</p> <p>Step 2 Deputy Headteacher- Mrs Cracknell</p> <p>Step 3 Headteacher- Mrs Noon</p>
Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs	Mrs Smail
Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Mrs Cracknell
Payments/Finance	Miss Byrne Mrs Tilbury
Admissions	Miss Byrne
Complaints	Please refer to school complaints policy on the website .

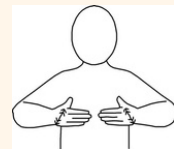
AT OUR SCHOOL WE FOLLOW HOLLYBUSH RULES

SAFE



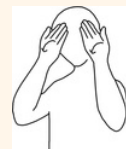
We move around school in a safe manner. We follow instructions to keep ourselves safe. We keep hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. We use equipment safely. We stay safe online. We talk to an adult if we feel unsafe.

READY



We wear correct uniform. We arrive at school on time. We have our equipment ready. We show that we are listening and ready to learn.

RESPECT



We listen when others speak and we respect the property of our friends and the school. We have an understanding of others cultures and beliefs. We respect that everyone have a right to learn.

WE ARE LEARNING

THE HOLLYBUSH WAY



THE HOLLYBUSH WAY



Lovely Lining Up

We face forwards
We keep our hands to ourselves
We line up silently

Magical Manners

We say please and thank you
We say 'good morning'
We hold doors open for people
We knock before entering rooms
We say 'excuse me' before speaking to a grown up

Super Sitting

We sit calmly and sensibly
We keep our hands to ourselves
We face the adult
We use our magnet eyes (if we can)
We use our eager ears for listening to our adult

Wonderful Walking

We walk quietly
We walk sensibly
We face the direction we are walking in
We keep our hands to ourselves

Delightful Dinners

We use our Magical Manners
We use our Lovely lining up
We use our Wonderful walking
We use our Super sitting
We talk quietly with our friends

Peaceful Playtimes

We use our Wonderful walking to and from the classroom
We use our Magical Manners
We remember our school values